

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
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R 150737Z MAR 78
FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4115
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PARM, PORG, SHUM, UR, US
SUBJ: LENINGRAD LECTURE ON INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

1. SUMMARY: MARCH 12 ZNANIYE COMMENTARY ON USSR INTERNATIONAL POSITION BY V. A. KARTASHOV AND U. A. DENISOV CONTAINED SOMEWHAT MORE EBULLIENT, CONFIDENT TONE THAN WE HAVE NOTICED IN RECENT MONTHS. ACCENT CLEARLY WAS ON RECENT SOVIET SUCCESSES WITH PROBLEM AREAS, NOTABLY MIDDLE EAST, LARGELY IGNORED. CLEAR IMPRESSION LEFT WITH LOWER AND MIDDLE-LEVEL PARTY FUNCTIONARIES WHO PACKED HALL WAS THAT, DESPITE WORSENING OF US-SOVIET RELATIONS, SOVIETS WERE AGAIN RIDING SERIES OF SUCCESSES WHICH HAVE FORCED "IMPERIALISTS" INTO DEFENSIVE AND DAMAGE LIMITING POSITIONS. SPEAKER CONVEYED ESPECIAL SATISFACTION WITH ITALIAN/FRENCH DEVELOPMENTS, BELGRADE CONFERENCE OUTCOME, AND RECENT SOVIET SPACE ACHIEVEMENTS. U.S.-SOVIET POLICY WAS RELEGATED TO SECOND HALF LECTURE, BUT CHINESE CAME IN FOR HEAVIEST BRICKBATS. END SUMMARY.

2. PRINCIPAL POINTS MADE BY LECTURERS WERE (IN ORDER
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THEIR PRESENTATION);

--EUROPEAN SITUATION IS DEVELOPING WELL FROM SOVIET VIEWPOINT. SOVIET EUROPEAN POLICY HAS ASSURED 33 YEARS WITHOUT WAR AND IS PROGRESSING WELL AS DEMONSTRATED BY CONTINUING SERIES MOSCOW MEETINGS AT VARIOUS LEVELS IN RECENT PAST SHOWING "DETENTE RESULTS." RECENT "WORKING

VISIT" OF GDR PREMIER WILLI STOPH WAS SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL MENTION.

--FRENCH ELECTIONS CHARACTERIZED AS PERIOD IN WHICH BOTH RIGHT AND LEFT ARE UNIFYING THEIR FORCES. LECTURER, HOWEVER, HEDGED ON MARCH 19 OUTCOME AND INSTEAD EMPHASIZED THAT GREAT SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH FRENCH RIGHT NOW VIEWS EVEN POSSIBILITY OF VICTORY OF "WORKERS BLOCK" IS ITSELF FACT OF "UTMOST SIGNIFICANCE."

--ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY DESCRIBED AS ENHANCING ITS ALREADY "HUGE INFLUENCE" BY FORCING CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS TO AGREE THAT IN FUTURE COMMUNISTS WILL BE "ONE OF PARTIES DETERMINING GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS," DESPITE U.S. EFFORTS STAVE OFF COOPERATION WITH COMMUNISTS.

--IN EXTENSIVE BUT REPETITIVE PRESENTATION, OUTCOME OF BELGRADE REVIEW CONFERENCE WAS PORTRAYED AS GREAT SOVIET SUCCESS. ALTHOUGH BRIEF AND UNSPECIFIC, FINAL DOCUMENT PERMITS EUROPEAN COOPERATION STARTED AT HELSINKI TO CONTINUE, FACT WHICH LECTURER TOLD AUDIENCE WAS ALSO POSITIVELY ASSESSED BY PRESIDENT CARTER. AUDIENCE WAS REPEATEDLY TOLD, HOWEVER, THAT "KEY FACT" WAS SUCCESS OF SOVIET DELEGATION IN STOPPING U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORTS WHICH WERE DIRECTED AT SOVIET UNION AND OTHER SOCIALIST STATES, AND WHICH CONSTITUTE "PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WARFARE" AND INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES. U.S. WAS AGAIN CAST AS PLAYING ONE ISSUE SPOILER ROLE AT BELGRADE IGNORING MORE POSITIVE PURSUITS, BUT AS FAILING TO ACHIEVE ITS ENDS AND EVEN UNABLE MARSHAL SUPPORT OF ALL OF ITS NATO ALLIES WHICH WAS "IMPORTANT FACT" OF CONFERENCE. U.S. AMBASSADOR GOLDBERG WAS AGAIN SINGLED OUT AS MAIN CULPRIT.

--RECENTLY CONCLUDED CHINESE PARTY CONGRESS WAS CONDEMNED FOR FAILING TAKE ANY LINE FOR IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH OTHER "SOCIALIST COUNTRIES" OR ON "WIDENING FRONT AGAINST IMPERIALISM". AUDIENCE WAS TOLD THAT DEFENSE MODERNIZATION IS REAL REASON BEHIND CURRENT CHINESE STRESS ON MODERNIZATION ALL ASPECTS CHINESE ECONOMY AND INFLUENCE OF CHINESE MILITARY ON ALL LEVELS CHINESE BUREAUCRACY WAS EMPHASIZED. CHINESE MODERNIZATION PLANS WERE INVIDIOUSLY COMPARED WITH FAILED GREAT LEAP FORWARD AND RIDICULED AS BEYOND CHINESE MEANS OF REALIZATION WITHIN PLANNED TIME FRAME. AUDIENCE WAS TOLD TO EXPECT CONTINUING INTERNAL UNREST AND PURGES AS STRUGGLE FOR DOMESTIC CONTROL CONTINUES. CHINESE TERRITORIAL CLAIMS (PRETENZIYA) UNDER WHICH CHINESE

DEMANDING MORE TERRITORY THAN THEY CURRENTLY OCCUPY CAME
IN FOR SPECIAL ATTACK.

--CHINESE ALSO CONTINUE TO BE MADE VILLIAN OF CAMBODIA-
VIETNAM PROBLEM BUT RAGTAG CAMBODIAN ARMY DESCRIBED AS
NO MATCH FOR LARGER, HIGHLY TRAINED AND MODERN-EQUIPPED
VIETNAMESE ARMY. THERE WAS NO MENTION OF ANY ARMED

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INCIDENTS ON CHINESE-VIETNAMESE BORDER. AUDIENCE WAS
TOLD THAT CONFLICT INVOLVES NO U.S. INTEREST AT ALL WITH
CLEAR IMPLICATION ANY U.S. INVOLVEMENT IS PURE TROUBLE-
MAKING.

--U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS CONTINUED BE DESCRIBED AS IN
"WORSENING STAGE," AS "ENEMIES OF DETENTE" CONTINUE
PRESSURE TO BUILD UP U.S. MILITARY AND FRUSTRATE
"POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS" IN BILATERAL RELATIONS. CARTER
ADMINISTRATION DESCRIBED AS GIVING FIRST PRIORITY TO
COUNTRY'S "ENORMOUS" DOMESTIC PROBLEMS WHICH SAID TO
INCLUDE "CRISES OF SPIRIT" AS WELL AS USUAL CATALOGUE OF
U.S. ECONOMIC WOES. NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL CHIEF
BRZEZINSKI CREDITED AS MAIN PROPONENT OF U.S. FOREIGN
POLICY DIRECTED (UNSUCCESSFULLY) AT TAKING POLITICAL
INITIATIVE AWAY FROM SOVIET UNION.

--POSITIVE, BUT CAUTIOUS ASSESSMENT, GIVEN ON
CONCLUSION SALT II TALKS WHICH CHARACTERIZED AS TOP ISSUE
NOT ONLY BILATERALLY BUT FOR ALL MANKIND. AUDIENCE TOLD

SALT II PROGRESS BEING MADE "STEP-BY-STEP" AND PRESIDENT CARTER IS QUOTED TO EFFECT THAT MANY KEY ISSUES ALREADY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAVE BEEN RESOLVED BUT THAT FEW "EXTREMELY DIFFICULT" PROBLEMS STILL REMAIN. POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES WITH CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL WERE AGAIN NOTED BUT WE DID NOT PICK UP ANY MENTION OF POSSIBLE LINK BETWEEN SALT II AND SITUATION IN AFRICAN HORN.

--CONSIDERABLE TIME WAS SPENT IN BALLYHOOING RECENT SOVIET SPACE TRIUMPHS INCLUDING INTERNATIONALIZATION OF SOVIET SPACE PROGRAM BY INCLUSION OF CZECH ASTRONAUT--WITH PROMISE OF FURTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRY PARTICIPATION IN NEAR FUTURE--AND SALYUT 6 BREAKING OF SPACE ENDURENCE RECORD SET BY SKYLAB 4. CHINESE SPACE EFFORTS RIDICULED AND U.S. IGNORED, LEAVING IMPRESSION THAT SOVIETS CURRENTLY HOLDING CENTER STAGE IN SPACE AS WELL.

--PRESENTATION ON CURRENT ETHIOPIAN-SOMALIAN SITUATION STRUCK US AS BORDERING ON JUBILANT AND, ON WHOLE, MORE FRANK THAN IN PAST MONTHS. SOVIET-CUBAN ROLE IN "HELPING" ETHIOPIA JUSTIFIED AT LENGTH AS PRINCIPLED SUPPORT FOR INVADERS PARTY WHICH HAS WIDE-SPREAD AFRICAN AND WORLD SUPPORT. STRATEGIC ASPECTS OF HORN CONFLICT WERE SET OUT IN FRANK DETAIL, AND "IMPERIALISTS" CONCERN THAT VICTORIOUS ETHIOPIAN ARMY STOP AT SOMALIAN BORDER CHARACTERIZED AS MOTIVATED BY DESIRE MAINTAIN STRATEGIC CONTROL OVER SUPPLY ROUTES. WE PICKED UP NO MENTION OF PARTICIPATION BY SOVIET GENERALS OR OTHER FOREIGN MILITARY OFFICERS OR TROOPS IN RECENT BATTLES.

--SPEAKER CONTINUED HAMMER AWAY AT NEUTRON BOMB ISSUE. CLAIM THAT, ACCORDING TO AP ARTICLE, U.S. HAS ALREADY MADE DECISION GO AHEAD WITH PRODUCTION OF BOMB IS CONTRASTED WITH CONTINUING SOVIET HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN VARIOUS FORA OUTLAW THIS NEW WEAPON. BUCHANAN

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